

## Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY NEA:SSOBER

APPROVED BY NEA:SSO0ER

S/S :RKUCHEL

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S E C R E T STATE 000170 TOSEC 250126

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E.O11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: PFOR, IS, US, XF, UN

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE TO RABIN  
FOR AMBASSADOR

1. PLEASE TRANSMIT THE FOLLOWING LETTER FROM PRESIDENT  
FORD TO PRIME MINISTER RABIN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

2. BEGIN TEXT:

DEAR MR. PRIME MINISTER:

I APPRECIATE RECEIVING YOUR LETTER OF DECEMBER 16, 1975.  
IN VIEW OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL  
DELIBERATIONS BEGINNING JANUARY 12, I BELIEVE IT IS  
ESSENTIAL FOR ME TO HAVE A FURTHER EXCHANGE WITH YOU  
REGARDING U.S. POLICY AND STRATEGY. I AM SHARING SOME  
TENTATIVE VIEWS NOW SO THAT YOU AND YOUR COLLEAGUES CAN  
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REFLECT UPON THEM BEFORE AND IN CONNECTION WITH FOREIGN  
MINISTER ALLON'S MEETINGS WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER. WE DO  
NOT WISH THE VERY DIFFICULT SECURITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS  
IN JANUARY TO BECOME A SOURCE OF MISUNDERSTANDING BETWEEN  
US. AS YOU YOURSELF HAVE OFTEN SAID, MR. PRIME MINISTER,

THERE IS MUCH THAT IS COMMON AND PARALLEL IN ISRAELI AND

U.S. POLICIES, BUT THEY HAVE NEVER BEEN AND CANNOT BE IDENTICAL.

WE HAVE STUDIED YOUR DECEMBER 1 LETTER WITH GREAT CARE AND UNDERSTANDING. ISRAEL NEED HAVE NO CONCERN REGARDING AN IMPOSED SOLUTION.

... A SETTLEMENT MUST COME AS A RESULT OF NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE PRINCIPAL PARTIES CONCERNED. WE ARE ALSO KEENLY AWARE THAT SYRIA IS SEEKING TO MAKE THE SECURITY COUNCIL THE PRIMARY AND MORE OR LESS PERMANENT INSTRUMENT OF DIPLOMACY. HERE, TOO, YOU SHOULD BE ASSURED THAT WE WOULD VIEW SUCH A DEVELOPMENT AS CONTRARY TO OUR MUTUAL INTERESTS. WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE STRONGLY AND FIRMLY THAT THE GENEVA CONFERENCE FRAMEWORK IS BEST SUITED FOR FUTURE DIPLOMACY.

HAVING SAID THIS, MR. PRIME MINISTER, I KNOW YOU FULLY REALIZE THAT WE FACE A MOST DIFFICULT AND DELICATE SITUATION IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL. YOUR NON-PARTICIPATION WILL MAKE MORE DIFFICULT AN OUTCOME SATISFACTORY TO YOU, BUT THIS IS A JUDGMENT FOR ISRAEL TO MAKE.

OUR PRINCIPAL CONCERNS ARE THAT THE COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS NOT DEEPEN THE STALEMATE SO IT BECOMES UNBREAKABLE, THAT THEY NOT DESTROY THE ROLE OF THE U.S. IN THE DIPLOMACY OF THE MIDDLE EAST, AND THEREFORE DIM, IF NOT EXTINGUISH, THE PROSPECTS FOR PROGRESS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND BRING THAT AREA CLOSER TO A RENEWAL OF HOSTILITIES.

IN THIS CONNECTION, I WANT TO MAKE CLEAR, SO AS TO AVOID ANY FUTURE MISUNDERSTANDING, THAT THE ISRAELI POSITION REGARDING RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 338, AS DESCRIBED IN YOUR LETTER, IN WHICH YOU SAY "WE CAN TOLERATE NO MODIFICATION  
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WHATSOEVER IN THE WORDING OR INTERPRETATION OF THOSE RESOLUTIONS..." DOES NOT ACCORD WITH OUR VIEW. WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY MADE CLEAR TO YOU THAT WE WILL OPPOSE AND, IF NECESSARY, VOTE AGAINST ANY INITIATIVE IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL TO ALTER ADVERSELY THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE GENEVA PEACE CONFERENCE OR TO CHANGE RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 338 IN ANY WAY WHICH IS INCOMPATIBLE WITH THEIR ORIGINAL PURPOSE. I DO NOT CITE THIS TO RAISE SEMANTICAL POINTS. I MERELY WANT TO SAY THAT WHETHER 242 OR 338 IS CONSIDERED TO BE UNDERMINED OR ALTERED ADVERSELY OR CHANGES ARE CONSIDERED INCOMPATIBLE WITH THEIR ORIGINAL PURPOSE WILL REQUIRE A JUDGMENT ON A SPECIFIC TEXT--A JUDGMENT THAT WE FEEL HAS TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT AS WELL THE CONSIDERATIONS AND CONCERNS I HAVE OUTLINED IN THE

PREVIOUS PARAGRAPHS OF THIS LETTER.

OUR ABILITY TO GET SUPPORT OF OTHERS FOR A SATISFACTORY RESULT IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL WILL ALSO BE INFLUENCED BY WHAT THEY BELIEVE ARE THE PROSPECTS FOR PROGRESS THROUGH EXERCISE OF VARIOUS AVAILABLE OPTIONS OUTSIDE THE COUNCIL. THERE UNDOUBTEDLY WILL BE AN OVERWHELMING SC MAJORITY--PARTICULARLY IN THE NEW SECURITY COUNCIL COMPOSITION OF 1976--FOR A RESOLUTION WHICH PROVIDES FOR PLO PARTICIPATION AT A GENEVA CONFERENCE. WE HAVE THOUGHT OF A NUMBER OF FORMULATIONS WHICH WE MAY FACE, ALL OF WHICH IN GREATER OR LESSER DEGREE WILL SEEK TO INJECT THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE. SOME FORMULATIONS WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY AFFECT ADVERSELY 242 AND 338, OTHERS MAY NOT. FOR EXAMPLE, WHAT IF THE U.S. IS FACED WITH A SIMPLE RESOLUTION REAFFIRMING 242 AND 338 AND ADDING TO THIS RESOLUTION LANGUAGE WHICH THE U.S. HAS USED IN ITS POLICY STATEMENTS TO THE EFFECT THAT A DURABLE AND JUST PEACE HAS TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT "THE LEGITIMATE INTERESTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE." WE BELIEVE IT IMPORTANT THAT SUCH FORMULATIONS BE DEALT WITH IN SUCH A WAY IN THE COUNCIL THAT THEY NOT DESTROY OTHER FUTURE NEGOTIATING OPTIONS.

THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION IS DIFFICULT FOR BOTH OF US, MR. PRIME MINISTER. EVEN IF THIS ISSUE CAN BE DEALT WITH SATISFACTORILY IN THE COUNCIL, IT IS NOT ONE THAT CAN BE AVOIDED ENTIRELY OUTSIDE THE COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS IF THE  
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NEGOTIATING POSSIBILITIES INHERENT IN A GENEVA CONFERENCE OR IN AN INFORMAL PREPARATORY TALK OF THE KIND SUGGESTED BY SECRETARY KISSINGER IN HIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY SPEECH ARE TO BE FURTHER PURSUED.

I HAVE MADE NO FINAL JUDGMENTS, MR. PRIME MINISTER, BUT I FELT IT IMPORTANT TO SHARE MY DEEP CONCERNS WITH YOU AND TO UNDERSCORE THAT WHEN YOUR FOREIGN MINISTER COMES TO WASHINGTON, HE BE PREPARED TO SPEAK SPECIFICALLY AND CONCRETELY ON THE DIFFICULT ISSUES REFERRED TO IN THIS LETTER.

FINALLY, MR. PRIME MINISTER, I KNOW THAT YOU ARE AWARE THAT PLANNING IS PROGRESSING SPEEDILY AND SMOOTHLY FOR YOUR VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES. IT IS ENTIRELY APPROPRIATE, MR. PRIME MINISTER, THAT IN THIS BICENTENNIAL YEAR--ISRAEL'S PRIME MINISTER, REPRESENTING A FREE AND DEMOCRATIC COUNTRY THAT SHARES FULLY OUR IDEAS AND FIRM DEDICATION TO INDEPENDENCE--WILL BE THE FIRST HEAD OF GOVERNMENT BEING RECEIVED IN 1976. ISRAEL AND THE U.S. HAVE BEEN TOGETHER THROUGH MUCH PERIL AND PROMISE. I KNOW THESE ARE DIFFICULT ISSUES I AM POSING IN THIS LETTER; BUT I DO SO AS A FRIEND WHOSE FIRM SUPPORT FOR

ISRAEL'S SECURITY AND SURVIVAL REMAINS UNDIMINISHED.

I WISH YOU, YOUR FAMILY, AND ALL OF THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL  
A YEAR OF PROGRESS AND TRANQUILITY AS THE SEARCH FOR  
PEACE CONTINUES.

SINCERELY, GERALD R. FORD. END TEXT. ROBINSON

SECRET

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 30 AUG 1999  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** n/a  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 01 JAN 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** saccheem  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976STATE000170  
**Document Source:** ADS  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** NEA:SSOBER  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** n/a  
**Film Number:** n/a  
**From:** STATE  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
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**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19760196/baaabaoe.tel  
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**Office:** UR  
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**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Page Count:** 4  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** NODIS  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** saccheem  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 09 APR 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <09 APR 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <29 SEP 2004 by saccheem>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** LOCK1  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** n/a  
**TAGS:** PFOR, IS, US, XF, UN  
**To:** TEL AVIV NIACT INFO SECRETARY  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006